

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the following claims:

1-13. (cancelled)

14. (currently amended) A data authentication system for validating an incoming request for selected information content received from a computer system in response to selection of a data interface provided to the computer system by an interface provider computer system, the interface provider computer system being associated with a unique interface provider identification code and ~~including an indicia generation system that dynamically generates~~ generating a unique computer identification code associated with the computer system when the data interface is provided to the computer system, the data interface comprising predetermined advertising content, the interface provider identification code, and the computer identification code, said data authentication system comprising:

a content provider computer system that stores information content and the predetermined advertising content, said content provider computer system providing the predetermined advertising content to the interface provider computer system and authenticating the incoming request that includes the interface provider identification code and the ~~user~~ computer identification code, and

a first database system that receives the interface provider identification code from said content provider computer system if said content provider computer system determines that the incoming request comprises an invalid information request,

wherein said content provider computer system provides the selected information content associated with the predetermined advertising content to the computer system if said content provider computer system determines that the incoming request comprises a valid information request.

15. (currently amended) The data authentication system of claim 14, wherein said content provider computer system communicates with the interface provider computer system and the ~~user~~ computer system via a communication system.

16. (previously presented) The data authentication system of claim 15, wherein said communication system comprises a communication link selected from the group consisting of a local area network, a wide area network, a public communication network, and the Internet.

17. (previously presented) The data authentication system of claim 15, wherein said communication system includes at least one wireless communication link.

18. (previously presented) The data authentication system of claim 14, wherein said provider computer system is associated with a merchant and said information content comprises information related to a business of the merchant.

19. (previously presented) The data authentication system of claim 14, further comprising a second database system, said content provider computer system providing the interface provider identification code to said second database system if the incoming request comprises said valid information request.

20. (previously presented) The data authentication system of claim 19, wherein said second database system tracks an amount of remuneration owed to the interface provider computer system.

21. (currently amended) The data authentication system of claim 14, wherein the ~~user~~ computer identification code includes an encrypted ~~user~~ computer identification code.

22. (currently amended) The data authentication system of claim 21, wherein the encrypted ~~user~~ computer identification code is encrypted in accordance with an encryption standard selected from the group consisting of a Data Encryption Standard (DES), an Enhanced Data Encryption Standard (EDES), and an One-Way Hash Function (MD5) standard.

23. (currently amended) The data authentication system of claim 14, wherein the ~~user~~ computer identification code includes current ~~user~~ computer information selected from the group consisting of at least one of an internet protocol address, a time stamp, a date stamp, and a cookie.

24. (currently amended) The data authentication system of claim 14, further comprising a third database system that includes known user data, and wherein said content provider computer system authenticates the incoming request by comparing the ~~user~~ computer identification code from the incoming request with said known user data.

25. (previously presented) The data authentication system of claim 14, wherein the data interface includes information designed for generating user interest selected from the group consisting of at least one of an image, text, multimedia data, commercial-type programming, a video clip, and a banner advertisement.

26. (currently amended) A data authentication system for validating an incoming request for selected information content received from a computer system in response to selection of a data interface provided to the computer system, the incoming request including a unique interface provider identification code and a unique ~~user~~ computer identification code, the selected information content being provided by a content provider computer system that stores information content and predetermined advertising content and that authenticates the incoming request from the ~~user~~ computer system, said data authentication system comprising:

an interface provider computer system that receives the predetermined advertising content from the content provider computer system and that provides the data interface to the user computer system, said interface provider computer system being associated with the interface provider identification code and ~~including the indicia generation system that dynamically generates~~ generating the ~~user~~ computer identification code associated with the ~~user~~ computer system when the data interface is provided to the computer system, the data interface comprising the predetermined advertising content, the interface provider identification code, and the user identification code; and

a first database system that receives the interface provider identification code from the content provider computer system if the content provider computer system determines that the incoming request comprises an invalid information request,

wherein the content provider computer system provides the selected information content associated with the predetermined advertising content to the computer system if said content provider computer system determines that the incoming request comprises a valid information request.

27. (currently amended) A method for validating an incoming request for selected information content received from a user computer system, comprising:

providing a content provider computer system that provides information content and predetermined advertising content and an interface provider computer system associated with a unique interface provider identification code;

at said interface provider computer system,

receiving said predetermined advertising content;

~~dynamically generating a unique user identification code associated with the user computer system; and~~

providing a data interface to the user computer system, said data interface comprising said predetermined advertising content, said ~~user identification code~~, ~~and an interface provider identification code~~, and a computer identification code associated with the computer system; and

dynamically generating said computer identification code when said data interface is provided to the computer system; and

at said content provider computer system,

receiving the incoming request being provided in response to selection of said data interface by the user computer system and including said interface provider identification code and said user computer identification code;

authenticating the incoming request from the user computer system;

providing the selected information content associated with said predetermined advertising content to the user computer system if the incoming request comprises a valid information request; and

providing said interface provider identification code to an invalid response database system if the incoming request comprises an invalid information request.

28. (currently amended) The method of claim 27, wherein said providing a said data interface comprises combining said ~~user~~ computer identification code and said interface provider identification code.

29. (currently amended) The method of claim 27, wherein said dynamically generating said unique ~~user~~ computer identification code includes encrypting said unique ~~user~~ computer identification code, and wherein said authenticating the incoming request includes decrypting said unique ~~user~~ computer identification code.

30. (currently amended) The method of claim 27, wherein said dynamically generating said unique ~~user~~ computer identification code comprises generating said unique ~~user~~ computer identification code that expires in accordance with a predetermined criteria.

31. (currently amended) The method of claim 30, wherein said dynamically generating said unique ~~user~~ computer identification code comprises generating said unique ~~user~~ computer identification code that expires in accordance at a predetermined time.

32. (currently amended) The method of claim 27, wherein said authenticating the incoming request includes comparing said ~~user~~ computer identification code from the incoming request with known user data.

33. (previously presented) The method of claim 27, further comprising providing said interface provider identification code to a valid response database system if the incoming request comprises said valid information request.